



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## AMERICAN WOMEN IN THE PARIS SALON.

It cannot be claimed that our countrywomen in the ateliers of Paris have as yet shown any symptoms of "setting the world on fire" with their art. That they are indefatigably industrious, and fired by high ambitions and hopes, is an undoubted fact, but it is equally a fact that no feminine Michael Angelo or even Raphael has yet indicated or prophesied her own lofty destiny among them. The same may be said of our young countrymen in the various studios of Paris—infinitely easier as the way of artistic study is made for them—therefore why should we complain that our American "woman's work" has not yet distinguished itself, and only fairly holds its own among the artistic work of the year?

Viewing it as it appeared in the Paris Salon of 1882, one had to confess that it lacked vigor and originality, however tasteful and elegant it might be. It betrayed a monotony of skilful and docile, too docile, imitativeness. Those who ran might read in each picture whose was the master hand that directed its creation, even if not compelled to acknowledge it only a direct copy of that master. Our women showed themselves timid, and too prone to worship and servilely copy acknowledged talent. One felt moved to ask for them a measure of Michael-Angelesque insolence and audacity, leaving every other artistic gift for a later petition. Their whole exhibit had a timid, shrinking air, as if it found itself in a sudden vulgar glare from which it would willingly hide, or as if each individual picture realized the sensations of the modest fruit-seller who cried her wares in a weak voice and then exclaimed, "Goodness, I hope nobody heard me!"

Only eight or ten American women were represented at the Palais de l'Industrie last May. This counting excludes the five or six lady exhibitors who were born in the United States of foreign parents, and whose lives are passed in Europe. Proceeding through the galleries in alphabetical order, the first of our American woman artists whose work met the sight was Miss Sarah Dodson of Philadelphia. Her canvas was called "The Invocation of Moses," and both by position and character was the most conspicuous work of an "Americaine" in the exposition. In asking audacity for our women students we would make a mild exception of Miss Dodson. She does not need more than she has, and other artistic gifts would serve her talent better. The legend of her canvas is in Exodus: "And when Moses lifted his hands Israel was victorious." The three colossal figures seem to be wrestling together in some heavy, spiritless struggle, which involves legs and arms in almost the confusion of the Laocoon. They have the bold, large forms of the artist's master, Luminais, but are somewhat deficient in modelling and relief. In color they overdo Luminais's occasional tendency to opaqueness and have a gloomy sullenness all their own. The flesh is broken by a multiplicity of shadows scarcely accounted for by the weak, evenly diffused light of a dull, thunderous sky. It is what is called "strong work," although so unattractive, and it shows power in its painter, which with as much attention paid to the finesse of technique as she has now paid to the bolder features, will give her the place among artists to which her ambition evidently aspires.

Miss Elizabeth Gardner's work, "Daphnis and Chloe," was in altogether another language. No two objects on earth could be more unlike each other in every respect than these two pictures. Miss Gardner is *all* technique—nothing but technique one might almost say—and her picture was as faultlessly, painfully perfect as the work of her master Bouguereau, whose style hers so much resembles. But with all the elaborate perfection of technique, there was an almost repellent coldness about Miss Gardner's work. Her faces were expressionless, her attitudes and drapery savoring strongly of the Academies. A heatless atmosphere surrounded her figures, an atmosphere as of silver—or rather steel—in impalpable solution. No one could ever imagine sunshine palpitating through the world she paints, the real earthly sunshine in which flowers bloom and birds are stimulated to musical ecstasy. A golden shimmer, on the contrary, would shock her cold, bloodless people perhaps to death, certainly out of their classical correctness of pose and sculptural arrangement of raiment. In this canvas of "Daphnis and Chloe" the absolute perfection of the artist's skill manifested itself as for-

cibly in the clothes of her people as in their faces, presumably the seats of their souls; and neither light nor strength concentrated themselves to show in those faces a spiritual illumination which the best painted raiment in the world could not have. If Miss Gardner would only study nature more and Bouguereau less, then would her splendid painting grow warm and vital, with a magnetic attraction which it utterly lacks now.

Miss Anna Klumpke, of San Francisco, had "An Eccentric" skied high above a good many far less meritorious canvases. It was a woman's head in an eccentric red bonnet, and was as original in character as it was in artistic treatment. The wide hat border enshrouded the piquant brown face like the halo of a Florentine saint. The color was a clever play upon reds—red flowers upon a red hat, a bunch of red flowers at the red breast—the different shades never losing consciousness that their beauty lay in preserving the values and tone of the ensemble, not in arrogant self-assertion.

Miss Matilda Latz had a "Tête de Chien," a spirited portrait caught at one of the intense canine instants when a dog pulsates with excitement from ears to tail. The wag of the tail was *not* painted, but was most eloquently expressed, and the bark quite filled the air of the nervous spaniel's startled neighborhood.

Miss Winnaretta Singer, of New York, had the conventional artistic "Breton Interior" carefully and elaborately painted, showing sincere, straightforward effort unmingled with theories or vivid individual bias or propulsion. It was a gray interior, as all the American interiors seemed to be this year, instead of the rich browns of other years, and either because of its hanging or because of a defective plane of perspective drawing, had a curious up-hill look, as if its central figure might at any moment slip down out of the canvas.

Mrs. L. L. Williams, of Boston, called her picture of a girl pulling down branches of pink blossoms to meet the mouths of two leaping kids, "Trois Larrons." This was as purely decorative work as if it were tapestry. The decorative branches strayed all over a canvas which had neither aerial nor atmospheric effect, nor hint of space or distance, but only one flat plane, like high-art wall-paper. The sentiment was of the juvenile picture-book order; the drawing of the feet was highly amateurish, and one of the kids looked almost as knowing and intelligent as Holman Hunt's scapegoat. The picture was as perfectly inoffensive artistically as it was morally, and no other reason was evident for its existence.

Mrs. Emily Elias had the only landscape in the Salon painted by an "Americaine." It was a dreamy forest vision veiled in the slumbrous haze of a lotus-laden atmosphere, not strong but graceful, and of the tone of high art rather than of the color of nature. Miss Cornelia Conant, of New York, had a canvas called "In the Garden," and Miss Conger had one called a "Napolitan," but the most vigilant searching was ineffectual to bring them out from the hopeless "alphabetical confusion," so nothing can be said of their good or bad qualities.

It may be noticed that all but one of these ladies exhibited figure pictures. In no single instance, beside that of Miss Dodson, was any attempt made at composition or grouping. Miss Gardner's two figures were not grouped; they were simply posed in the stereotyped fashion of the "ateliers des dames." Miss Dodson's figures were grouped, and were vigorous in form even if somewhat spiritless in action; but she was the only one of our countrywomen who seemed to wrestle with other than the simplest forms of conventional, lady-like art. May the gods give our women-artists more audacity!

FOR the protection of Americans abroad, who are often shamelessly swindled in their purchases of paintings and other objects of art, we have made an arrangement in London with Messrs. Davis, the experts, of 147 New Bond Street, who will, for a small fee, pronounce on the genuineness of any articles submitted to them. We hope soon to announce the completion of similar arrangements with experts in Paris and other continental art centres. At no time, probably, have so many Americans abroad been imposed upon as during the past summer in the purchase of fraudulent "antiques," more especially in the matter of carved furniture.

## The Note Book.

LONDON, July 31, 1882.



CURIOUS libel suit has been engaging the attention of society here lately. For some time it has been whispered in artistic circles that the sculptor, Mr. Richard Belt, who, for a young man, has had very remarkable success in obtaining important public and private commissions for statu-

ary, did not do the work entrusted to him, but employed what is known as a "sculptor's ghost" to finish what he had roughly begun. This report at length found its way into the columns of *Vanity Fair*, a weekly "society" journal, and the plaintiff now sues the proprietor for the sum of £10,000 damages. The following is the alleged libel:

"After leaving Mr. Lawes' studio in 1875 Mr. Belt began to do business on his own account. He published as his own work a statuette of Dean Stanley, of which a good deal has been lately heard. This statuette, however, was worked for him by Mr. Brock, as Mr. Brock himself declares. In like manner the memorial busts of Charles Kingsley and of Canon Conway, which also pass as the work of Mr. Belt, were in fact invested by Mr. Brock, as Mr. Brock himself declares, with whatever artistic merit they possess. Mr. Brock, equally with Mr. Lawes, declares that Mr. Belt was himself incapable of doing anything in the shape of artistic work. . . . Mr. Ver-Heyden states equally with Mr. Lawes and Mr. Brock that he was quite incapable of doing any artistic work whatever. . . . The point is that if our information is correct he has systematically and falsely claimed to be the author of the works for which he was only the broker, that he presents himself as a sculptor and an artist, when in reality he is but a statue jobber and a tradesman. If, then, the statements made to us are true—and we frankly avow that at present we fully believe them to be perfectly true—Mr. Belt has been guilty of a very scandalous imposture, and those who have admired and patronized him as a heaven-born genius are the victims of a monstrous deception."

\* \* \*

THE next libel complained of was in a letter written by the defendant in the following September, drawing the attention of the Lord Mayor, in reference to the competition for a memorial advertised for by the Corporation, to the statements made in *Vanity Fair*, which, the defendant alleges, remained uncontradicted, for the reason that no denial of the allegations could possibly be substantiated.

\* \* \*

THE testimony has been very contradictory. Mr. Belt has vigorously denied some strikingly circumstantial statements of various witnesses who have sworn that they did the work for which he has been paid and which he has claimed as his own. He has, in turn, put on the stand numerous persons for whom at different times he has executed commissions, and they declare that in many cases they have seen him do the work himself, and are satisfied that he is fully capable of doing whatever sculpture he may claim as his own. Mr. Belt's lawyers have proposed to settle the question of their client's proficiency by having an exhibition of his skill in open court. The presiding judge, Baron Huddleston, seemed immensely tickled with the idea, and at once consented to be the subject of the trial. It was justly urged by the other side that such an exhibition would prove very little, unless a jury of experts should pass upon the merit of the work. But the court has ordered that the experiment be made, and when the case comes up again in November, to which date it has been adjourned, there will be presented in the Queen's Bench the novel spectacle of a sculptor at work with clay, wet cloths, water, wires, wooden scrapers and pointers, and all the rest of the paraphernalia.

\* \* \*

SUCH a trial suggests some queer fancies. Suppose the sculptor insidiously flatters his subject. Will it influence the judge in his charge to the jury? Or suppose that, to make the likeness more striking, he exaggerates some characteristic feature of his honor's physiognomy, will his honor visit the offence upon him by leaning somewhat unduly on the side of the defendant? Judges are only mortals, and, like the rest of us, have their small weaknesses. Mr. Belt should carefully study those of Baron Huddleston. To insure a favorable verdict, too, he cannot afford to be indifferent to the artistic predilections of the gentlemen of the jury. The London bourgeoisie, he should remember, have peculiar